State of Idaho

DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 27, 2012

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NOT ALL HEALTH INSURANCE PRODUCTS ARE EQUAL Consumers should Stop, Read, Understand

BOISE ID (February 27, 2012) – Consumers are seeing many changes in the health insurance landscape as Health Care Reform measures are implemented. The Idaho Department of Insurance urges consumers to take time to confirm specific coverage and benefits of a plan before buying any product.

Department Director Bill Deal says, "Traditional health insurance differs from limited medical benefit plans or mini-med plans. Not all mini-med plans are the same. Some limited plans offer a very low level of actual health insurance coverage."

Limited medical benefit or mini-med plans are often sold as cheap alternatives to medical health insurance. They may be advertised as "real health insurance," "available for limited 'open enrollment' period," "guarantee issue or acceptance."

Consumers should be sure the policy offers the benefits and protections they need. The Department encourages shoppers to obtain the full name and address of the insurance producer and company, written outline of coverage, explanation of monthly cost, and all benefits, limitations and exclusions.

The Department has issued a Consumer Alert with more information to help consumers identify the differences between coverages along with red flags to watch out for. Consumers with questions about this and other insurance issues should call the Department at 334-4250 in the Boise area, 800-721-3272 toll-free statewide, or visit the website, www.doi.idaho.gov.

About the Department of Insurance

The Idaho Department of Insurance has been regulating the business of insurance in Idaho since 1901. The mission of the Department is to equitably, effectively and efficiently administer the Idaho Insurance Code and the International Fire Code. For more information, visit www.doi.idaho.gov.